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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 7, 2nd full paragraph:

In both the prior art and a first embodiment of the present invention, a DSL modem is installed within network node 105. The DSL modem receives signals via a fibre-optic link supplied to the network node 105, converts these signals to electrical signals and applies them to the distribution section 109 of the transmission line. It is, of course, necessary to provide power to the DSL modem to enable it to operate. However, drawing power from the battery 113 in exchange 103 is found to reduce the power supplied to telephone 101 to the extent that it ceases to operate properly. However, in the present embodiment remote unit 213 is connected to a local power feed (e.g. mains power) operable to provide DC power to a remote unit power supply unit. The remote unit power supply unit is operable to supply current to telephone 101 to enable it to function properly. Moreover, since a local power feed is used to provide power to telephone 101, it is no longer necessary to supply DC power on to the distribution section 109 of the transmission line. The remote unit power supply unit can instead feed power on to the distribution section 109 for transmission towards circuit 215 within network node 105, which power can be used to power the service load. Although a DSL modem is powered in the present embodiment, those skilled in the art will realise that the present invention can be used to power other service loads, such as a wireless network access point.

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[[PSS]] PSU 331 feeds DC on to the distribution section 109 of the transmission line via reversing switch 335. Reversing switch 335 is used to ensure that the polarity of the DC power feed being supplied onto the distribution section 109 of the transmission line by PSU 331 is reversed with respect to any DC power feed being received from exchange 103. (There will be a DC power feed from the exchange when the remote unit 213 is not operating and all signals are being transmitted via the bypass branches.) This is useful in relation to the remote unit 213 start up procedure, which will be described below. A polarity detector 337 (installed on the exchange side of switch 305) detects the polarity of the line feed received from the exchange (i.e. whether it is +48V or -48V) and communicates this information to the remote unit microcontroller. The remote unit microcontroller uses this information when operating reversing switch 335 to ensure that the polarity of the DC power feed being supplied onto the distribution section 109 of the transmission line by PSU 331 is reversed with respect to the line feed received from the exchange 103.